

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS:

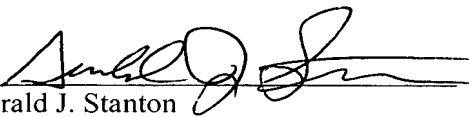
Claims 1-37 are pending in this Application. In the Office Action dated February 9th, 2005, the Examiner has rejected all claims under 35 USC 103(a) in view of various combinations of the following references: WO 95/04419 to Cullen; US Pat. No. 6,442,150 B1 to Kondo; US Pat. No. 5,594,949 to Andersson; US Pat. No. 5,267,261 to Blakeney, II; and US Pat. No. 6,009,328 to Muszynski.

Each and every claim rejection relies on a combination of Cullen with Kondo, but Kondo does not appear to be valid prior art against the present application. Specifically, the earliest priority date seen for Kondo is June 11, 1998 (a Japanese application recited on the cover page of Kondo). The earliest priority date for the present application is February 17, 1998, the filing date for a patent application in Finland from which PCT/FI99/00096 claims priority. The present application is a US national stage entry from PCT/FI99/00096, and is therefore entitled to the February 17, 1998 priority date.

The claimed subject matter that the Office Action asserts is taught in Kondo is not seen in any other reference of record, as detailed in the Appeal Brief dated October 18, 2004 and admitted in the Office Action. The Applicant contends that each and every claim rejection is therefore moot.

This application has been pending in the US for over four and a half years, including multiple non-final office actions and the beginning stages of an appeal. The Applicant appreciates that a thorough and complete examination results in a stronger patent for enforcement. By any measure this particular application has been exhaustively scrutinized, and its claims continue to prove both novel and non-obvious. The Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner pass the pending 37 claims to issue. The undersigned representative welcomes the opportunity to resolve any matters, formal or otherwise, via teleconference at the Examiner's discretion.

Respectfully submitted:


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April 21, 2005
Date

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April 21, 2005
Date

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